



The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey

2023/2024 Stalking Data Brief



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Background and Definition

Stalking is a serious public health problem that affects millions of women and men. It can have harmful effects on the well-being and daily lives of victims, as well as potentially affecting their families and loved ones. This data brief presents 2023/2024 national and state-level prevalence estimates for stalking victimization from CDC's National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS). When describing the state estimates, we have indicated the number of states with statistically stable estimates and counted the District of Columbia (DC) as a state, for a total of 51.

NISVS data were collected from September 2023 through September 2024, and 15,609 U.S. adults (8,842 women and 6,767 men) completed the survey. The survey response rate was 16.5%, and the cooperation rate was 72.1%. (American Association for Public Opinion [AAPOR] Response Rate 4 and Cooperation Rate 4, respectively).¹ The 2023/2024 Methodology Report highlights important information about revisions to the stalking measures, the overall survey instrument, sampling and data collection methodologies, including the new address-based sampling and push-to-web survey methodology.²

How NISVS Measured Stalking

Stalking involves a perpetrator's use of a pattern of harassing or threatening tactics that are both unwanted and cause fear or safety concerns. For the purposes of this data brief, a person was characterized as a stalking victim if they (1) experienced any stalking tactics (or a combination of tactics) more than once from the same perpetrator; (2) felt afraid, threatened, or concerned about their own safety or others' safety due to the perpetrator's actions, or received physical threats from the perpetrator.

Stalking tactics measured:

- Unwanted following, watching, or spying on the victim
- Unwanted approaching or showing up in places, such as the victim's home, workplace, or school
- Sneaking onto the victim's property, such as their home or car, and doing things to scare the victim or let the victim know they had been there
- Unwanted cards, letters, flowers, or presents
- Unwanted phone calls, emails, voicemails, or text messages
- Unwanted messages through social media
- Watching or spying on with a hidden camera
- Using social media to monitor or track the victim, their communication, or location without permission
- Using technology, such as a global positioning system (GPS) device, app, or other electronic tracking system, to track the victim's location without permission
- Using technology, such as computer software, apps, or stalkerware, to monitor the victim's communication or activities without permission

In follow-up questions, respondents who experienced any of the above tactics more than once by the same perpetrator were asked whether they had experienced any of the following:

- Perpetrator made them feel afraid, threatened, or concerned for their safety or the safety of others^a
- Perpetrator made threats of physical harm^a
- Victim experienced mental or emotional harm (e.g., anxiety or depression) afterward^b

^a Asked as part of the criteria for stalking victimization (at least one must be answered as "yes").

^b Used to assess the impact of stalking but was not required to be categorized as a stalking victim.

Findings

Prevalence of Stalking Victimization, U.S. Women and Men

- More than 1 in 5 women (22.5% or 28.8 million) in the United States have experienced stalking during their lifetimes. In the 12 months before the survey, 1 in 20 women (5.5% or 7.0 million) were stalked (Table 1).
- Among reportable states (all but one state), women's lifetime stalking prevalence estimates ranged from 15.6% to 35.2% (Table 2).
- Approximately 1 in 10 men (9.7% or about 11.9 million) in the United States have experienced stalking in their lifetimes. In the 12 months prior to the survey, about 1 in 33 men (3.0% or 3.7 million) were stalked (Table 1).
- Across states, men's lifetime estimates of stalking were only reportable for California, where the prevalence was 10.6%, 95% CI [6.5, 17.0], indicating that an estimated 1,560,000 men in California have experienced stalking at some time in their lives (data not shown).

Tactics Experienced by Stalking Victims

Among Female Victims

- Approximately three-quarters of female stalking victims were followed, watched, or spied on (78.3%), or were approached in locations such as their home, workplace, or school when it was not wanted (74.2%) during their lifetime (Table 3).
- Nearly 7 in 10 female stalking victims (69.2%) received unwanted phone calls, email messages, voice messages, or text messages.
- Nearly half (46.8%) of female stalking victims received unwanted messages through social media. Over 1 in 3 (36.3%) stated that the perpetrator used social media to monitor or track them, their communication, or their location.
- More than 1 in 3 female stalking victims received unwanted cards, letters, flowers, or gifts (37.3%) or had a perpetrator sneak onto their property, such as their home or car, and do things to scare them (43.1%).
- Female stalking victims experienced technology-facilitated behaviors, such as being tracked via GPS technology (15.6%), or monitored through computer software, apps, or other stalkerware (20.1%) without permission.
- Over 1 in 10 (12.6%) female stalking victims were watched with a hidden camera.
- Nearly all female stalking victims (98.7%) felt afraid, threatened, or concerned for their safety or the safety of others. Additionally, more than half (52.4%) of the victims were threatened with physical harm. As a direct result of the perpetrator's behaviors, most female victims (85.2%) suffered mental or emotional harm.

Among Male Victims

- Over 3 out of 4 male stalking victims were followed, watched, or spied on (75.9%), and nearly 2 in 3 were approached in places such as their home, workplace, or school when it was unwanted (63.9%) (Table 4).
- Nearly 7 in 10 male stalking victims (69.1%) received unwanted phone calls, email messages, voice messages, or text messages.
- More than half (53.9%) of male stalking victims received unwanted messages through social media. Over 2 in 5 (43.8%) stated that the perpetrator used social media to monitor or track them, their communication, or their location.
- More than 1 in 4 (26.0%) male stalking victims received unwanted cards, letters, flowers, or gifts. Almost half (45.7%) had a perpetrator sneak onto their property, including their home or car, and do things to scare them.
- Male stalking victims experienced technology-facilitated behaviors, such as being tracked via GPS technology (29.3%) or monitored through computer software, apps, or other stalkerware (25.0%) without permission.
- About 1 in 5 (19.5%) male stalking victims were spied on with a hidden camera.
- More than 9 in 10 male stalking victims felt afraid, threatened, or concerned for their safety or the safety of others (91.4%), and nearly 2 in 3 were threatened with physical harm (63.8%). As a direct result of the perpetrator's behaviors, most male victims (71.6%) suffered mental or emotional harm.

Discussion and Conclusion

Findings indicate that stalking victimization is common in the United States. More than 28 million women and 11 million men in the United States experienced some form of stalking victimization during their lifetimes, and over 7 million women and 3 million men were stalked in the 12 months prior to taking the survey. The most common stalking tactics committed against both female and male victims of stalking are a combination of surveillance tactics (e.g., being followed, watched, or spied on) and life invasion tactics (e.g., receiving repeated unwanted phone calls, emails, voice or text messages; being approached in places such as their home, work, or school).² Surveillance tactics were experienced by most stalking victims, with 78% of female and 76% of male victims stating that they were followed, watched, or spied on. Both female and male victims often experienced other tactics that involved invasive physical behaviors (e.g., sneaking onto the victim's property) or intrusion via social media (e.g., sending unwanted messages through social platforms). For male victims, being monitored or tracked via social media without permission was also common, reported by about 44% of male victims. Questions about technology-facilitated stalking tactics were expanded in the 2023/2024 administration of NISVS. Although not the most common, technology-facilitated tactics (e.g., using GPS or computer software) ranged from about 16% to 29% for female and male victims, which equates to millions of victims. These findings suggest that, although modern technology has introduced new ways of stalking, victims are still subjected to a combination of surveillance and invasive tactics that include watching from afar, sending gifts, following, and showing up unexpectedly. Future administrations of NISVS will allow us to determine if there is an increase in technology-facilitated stalking tactics as they potentially become more available and mainstream. State-level prevalence data on female lifetime stalking victimization ranged from 15.6% to 35.2% (all states reportable except one). California was the only state in this U.S. population survey with statistically stable lifetime prevalence data for male victims.

These findings suggest that stalking victimization has significant impacts on victims. Mental or emotional harm resulting from stalking victimization was experienced by over 85% of female victims and 71% of male victims. This finding suggests that most victims may have suffered a more sustained negative impact on their emotional well-being. In addition, previous studies⁴⁻⁶ have shown that stalking victimization can impact a range of physical health outcomes, in addition to psychological impacts, and can increase the risk of death of the victim. Previous research found that in severe cases, stalking may be associated with homicide risk.⁷ Preventing stalking and its negative impacts are important objectives to protect and enhance the long-term health of U.S. women and men.

Limitations

Limitations related to the broader survey methodology can be found in the 2023/2024 NISVS Methodology Report. Additional limitations specifically relate to the measurement of stalking. First, readers are cautioned against comparing the findings in this report to NISVS findings from previous data years due to revisions to the stalking measurement and changes in the data collection methodology. Second, due to how the stalking tactics were assessed, 12-month prevalence of individual tactics are not available. See the NISVS Methodology Report¹ for more information. Third, while specific stalking tactics are intended by the perpetrator to be recognized by a victim (e.g., sending cards/gifts), others are likely committed with the intention to escape detection. Surreptitious, technology-facilitated tactics, which typically do not involve physical proximity of the perpetrator, may be more difficult for victims to detect; consequently, the extent to which those tactics are experienced may be underestimated relative to their true prevalence. The lifetime prevalence of technology-facilitated tactics may also be lower than physically invasive, in-person tactics because, for many older respondents, the technology enabling these tactics was not available when they were younger. Finally, the measurement of stalking used in this study does not capture all the ways stalking can be perpetrated, which might contribute to underestimating this problem.

Conclusion

This report suggests that stalking is a major public health issue affecting millions of women and men, both at the national level and within individual states. The data indicate that victims face a variety of stalking tactics from their perpetrators, and technological advances may increase the invasiveness of these tactics. Further, for the large majority of victims, stalking instills significant fear and mental and emotional harm, potentially disrupting victims' daily life, work productivity, and physical health and safety. Ongoing monitoring is essential to track the prevalence and identify the characteristics of stalking victimization, which can shape prevention strategies and help reduce the immediate and long-term effects on victims' physical and mental health.

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Tables

Table 1

Lifetime and 12-Month Prevalence of Stalking Victimization — U.S. Women and Men, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2023/2024 Annualized Estimates

	Lifetime			12-Month		
	Weighted %	95% CI	Estimated Number of Victims*	Weighted %	95% CI	Estimated Number of Victims*
Women	22.5	(21.1, 24.0)	28,811,000	5.5	(4.7, 6.4)	7,049,000
Men	9.7	(8.5, 11.2)	11,880,000	3.0	(2.2, 4.1)	3,720,000

Abbreviation: CI = confidence interval.

* Rounded to the nearest thousand.

Note: Analyses were conducted using SAS (version 9.4) and SAS-callable SUDAAN™ statistical software (version 11.0.3).

Table 2**Lifetime Prevalence of Stalking by State of Residence — U.S. Women, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2023/2024 Annualized Estimates**

State	Weighted %	95% CI	Estimated Number of Victims*
United States ¹	22.5	(21.1, 24.0)	28,811,000
Alabama	32.0	(21.9, 44.1)	634,000
Alaska	27.4	(19.2, 37.4)	70,000
Arizona	24.8	(16.7, 35.3)	684,000
Arkansas	21.6	(13.9, 32.1)	250,000
California	22.4	(17.9, 27.7)	3,372,000
Colorado	21.4	(15.2, 29.2)	470,000
Connecticut	17.8	(11.2, 26.9)	253,000
Delaware	22.5	(15.5, 31.6)	90,000
District of Columbia	27.8	(20.3, 36.8)	77,000
Florida	25.5	(18.9, 33.4)	2,228,000
Georgia	24.5	(16.9, 34.2)	1,021,000
Hawaii	20.8	(14.1, 29.6)	116,000
Idaho	19.9	(14.0, 27.4)	135,000
Illinois	21.6	(14.6, 30.8)	1,071,000
Indiana	22.0	(14.6, 31.6)	565,000
Iowa	18.2	(12.2, 26.3)	217,000
Kansas	25.0	(18.0, 33.7)	272,000
Kentucky	15.6	(10.0, 23.5)	270,000
Louisiana	19.4	(11.7, 30.5)	348,000
Maine	27.9	(19.8, 37.8)	155,000
Maryland	31.7	(23.4, 41.4)	773,000
Massachusetts	16.8	(11.1, 24.5)	467,000
Michigan	22.2	(15.8, 30.3)	875,000
Minnesota	24.5	(17.8, 32.7)	524,000
Mississippi	26.7	(18.0, 37.7)	307,000
Missouri	28.9	(20.4, 39.3)	688,000
Montana	26.8	(19.7, 35.3)	111,000
Nebraska	20.0	(14.1, 27.6)	144,000
Nevada	24.2	(15.3, 36.1)	288,000
New Hampshire	19.7	(13.2, 28.5)	108,000
New Jersey	--	--	--
New Mexico	24.2	(16.5, 33.9)	197,000
New York	17.3	(12.3, 23.8)	1,376,000

Table 2 (Continued)**Lifetime Prevalence of Stalking by State of Residence — U.S. Women, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2023/2024 Annualized Estimates**

State	Weighted %	95% CI	Estimated Number of Victims*
North Carolina	20.8	(14.0, 29.7)	857,000
North Dakota	18.8	(13.2, 26.0)	52,000
Ohio	25.8	(18.6, 34.6)	1,178,000
Oklahoma	28.2	(20.2, 37.8)	418,000
Oregon	32.8	(25.0, 41.6)	544,000
Pennsylvania	26.7	(18.4, 37.0)	1,360,000
Rhode Island	18.5	(12.6, 26.3)	80,000
South Carolina	17.2	(11.4, 25.1)	351,000
South Dakota	33.2	(24.9, 42.8)	106,000
Tennessee	24.8	(16.6, 35.3)	672,000
Texas	18.9	(13.6, 25.7)	2,044,000
Utah	29.3	(21.6, 38.5)	335,000
Vermont	21.7	(16.2, 28.5)	55,000
Virginia	21.6	(14.8, 30.4)	724,000
Washington	29.0	(21.1, 38.3)	852,000
West Virginia	35.2	(26.5, 45.1)	248,000
Wisconsin	15.9	(11.0, 22.5)	359,000
Wyoming	23.5	(16.1, 33.0)	50,000

Abbreviation: CI = confidence interval.

¹ U.S. estimates based on data from all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

* Rounded to the nearest thousand.

--Estimate is not reported; relative standard error > 30% or cell size ≤ 20.

Note: Analyses were conducted using SAS (version 9.4) and SAS-callable SUDAAN™ statistical software (version 11.0.3).

Table 3**Lifetime Reports of Tactics and Experiences by Female Stalking Victims, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2023/2024 Annualized Estimates**

Tactics Experienced by Stalking Victims ¹	Lifetime		
	Weighted %	95% CI	Estimated Number of Victims*
Followed you around, watched or spied on you when you did not want them to	78.3	(75.2, 81.1)	22,559,000
Approached you or showed up in places such as your home, work, or school when you did not want them to	74.2	(70.9, 77.3)	21,381,000
Sneaked onto your property such as your home or car, and did things to scare you by letting you know they had been there	43.1	(39.7, 46.6)	12,425,000
Sent you unwanted cards, letters, flowers, or presents when they knew you didn't want them to	37.3	(34.0, 40.7)	10,740,000
Repeatedly made unwanted phone calls or sent unwanted emails, voice, or text messages	69.2	(65.8, 72.4)	19,930,000
Repeatedly sent you unwanted messages through social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and chat rooms	46.8	(43.3, 50.4)	13,493,000
Watched or spied on you with a hidden camera	12.6	(10.3, 15.2)	3,622,000
Used social media to monitor or track you, your communication, or your location without permission	36.3	(33.0, 39.8)	10,460,000
Used location technology, such as a GPS (Global Positioning System) device, app, or other electronic tracking system to track your location without permission	15.6	(13.1, 18.4)	4,487,000
Used technology, such as computer software, apps, or stalkerware to monitor your communication or activities without permission	20.1	(17.3, 23.3)	5,787,000
Other Experiences of Stalking Victims			
Felt afraid, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others ²	98.7	(97.7, 99.3)	28,439,000
Threatened with physical harm (even if the threat was not taken seriously) ²	52.4	(48.9, 55.9)	15,107,000
Experienced mental or emotional harm (for example, anxiety or depression) after these things happened ³	85.2	(82.7, 87.4)	24,555,000

Abbreviation: CI = confidence interval.

¹ Estimates include all tactics reported by those who met the criteria for stalking victimization, defined as having experienced any stalking behaviors more than once from the same perpetrator and felt afraid, threatened, or concerned about their own safety or others' safety due to the perpetrator's actions, or if they received physical threats from the perpetrator.

² Asked as follow-up questions to determine whether the respondent met the full criteria for stalking victimization. Respondents must have answered "yes" to at least one of these two experiences to be classified as a stalking victim.

³ Used to assess the impact of stalking but was not required to be categorized as a stalking victim.

* Rounded to the nearest thousand.

Note: Analyses were conducted using SAS (version 9.4) and SAS-callable SUDAAN™ statistical software (version 11.0.3).

Table 4**Lifetime Reports of Tactics and Experiences by Male Stalking Victims, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2023/2024 Annualized Estimates**

Tactics Experienced by Stalking Victims ¹	Lifetime		
	Weighted %	95% CI	Estimated Number of Victims*
Followed you around, watched or spied on you when you did not want them to	75.9	(68.9, 81.7)	9,017,000
Approached you or showed up in places such as your home, work, or school when you did not want them to	63.9	(56.4, 70.8)	7,590,000
Sneaked onto your property such as your home or car, and did things to scare you by letting you know they had been there	45.7	(38.4, 53.3)	5,432,000
Sent you unwanted cards, letters, flowers, or presents when they knew you didn't want them to	26.0	(19.7, 33.5)	3,087,000
Repeatedly made unwanted phone calls to you or sent you unwanted emails, voice, or text messages	69.1	(62.6, 75.0)	8,214,000
Repeatedly sent you unwanted messages through social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and chat rooms	53.9	(46.6, 61.2)	6,409,000
Watched or spied on you with a hidden camera	19.5	(14.0, 26.5)	2,319,000
Used social media to monitor or track you, your communication, or your location without your permission	43.8	(36.5, 51.4)	5,209,000
Used location technology, such as a GPS (Global Positioning System) device, app, or other electronic tracking system to track your location without permission	29.3	(22.5, 37.0)	3,475,000
Used technology, such as computer software, apps, or stalkerware to monitor your communication or activities without your permission	25.0	(18.9, 32.1)	2,965,000
Other Experiences of Stalking Victims			
Felt afraid, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others ²	91.4	(87.3, 94.3)	10,863,000
Threatened with physical harm (even if the threat was not taken seriously) ²	63.8	(56.6, 70.5)	7,584,000
Experienced mental or emotional harm (for example, anxiety or depression) after these things happened ³	71.6	(64.0, 78.2)	8,511,000

Abbreviation: CI = confidence interval.

¹ Estimates include all tactics reported by those who met the criteria for stalking victimization, defined as having experienced any stalking behaviors more than once from the same perpetrator and felt afraid, threatened, or concerned about their own safety or others' safety due to the perpetrator's actions, or if they received physical threats from the perpetrator.

² Asked as follow-up questions to determine whether the respondent met the full criteria for stalking victimization. Respondents must have answered "yes" to at least one of these two experiences to be classified as a stalking victim.

³ Used to assess the impact of stalking but was not required to be categorized as a stalking victim.

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